

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9-21, 23-29, and 31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 23, and 24 are amended, claims 8, 22 and 30 are cancelled, and claim 31 is added. In particular, the allowable features of claims 8, 22 and 30 have been incorporated into independent claims 1, 15 and 23, respectively. The dependent claims have been similarly amended to reflect the changes in the independent claims. Support for the new claim can be found in Applicants' original application, for example, at page 4, line 10-page 6, line 17; page 19, lines 10-28; page 22, lines 4-26; and page 28, lines 10-13. No new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowability for claims 8, 22 and 30.

The rejections of claims 1-3, 5, 6, 9-11, 13-15, 20, 23, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Okabe, U.S. Patent No. 5,980,283; claims 1-4, 10-12, 15-17, 19, 23, 24, 25, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Mikhail, U.S. Patent No. 6,913,474; claims 1, 7, 15, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 26, and under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Martin, U.S. Patent No. 6,767,231; and claims 1, 15, 21, 23, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Martin, U.S. Patent No. 6,644,991, have been rendered moot because the allowable features of claims 8, 22 and 30 have been incorporated into independent claims 1, 15 and 23, respectively. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Independent claim 31 recites features similar to independent claims 1, 15 and 23 and is thus allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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Attachment:
Amendment Transmittal

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